

The Future of Water Reuse in the State of Maryland

Public Outreach Issues

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Fundamental Themes of Successful Water Reuse Campaigns



Common Themes of Success

- **Reuse projects must articulate a clear need for more water**
- **The public is informed from the beginning of the planning stage**
- **Outreach focuses on the benefits to the community**
- **Clear and open communication with stakeholders is essential**

The Most Common Concerns

- **More water = more growth**
- **Using wastewater is yucky**
- **Can this hurt me or my family? Or my dog?**
- **Will this raise my rates?**
- **Will recycled water damage the landscape?**

Market Research Findings

- **There is a profound mistrust of government**
- **When awareness is low, anxiety is high**
- **Most people have little knowledge of local water supply issues**
- **“Yuck Factor” must be squarely addressed**
- **The more information people have, the higher level of support**

Market Research Findings

**Recycled water customers
require special attention:**

- **Service should be hands-on**
- **Water should be discounted**
- **Most customers like positive publicity**

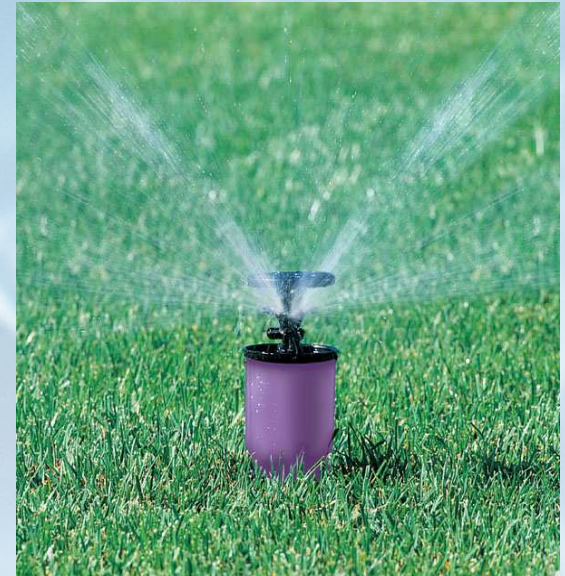


Stress the Benefits of Reuse

- **Recycled water helps conserve drinking water supplies**
- **Recycled water is drought-proof**
- **It's economical compared to new water supplies**
- **Recycled water is smart reuse of a valuable resource**
- **Recycled water saves energy**

Successful Water Recycling Programs

- **San Antonio, Texas**
- **Las Vegas, Nevada**
- **Orlando, Florida**
- **Las Virgenes MWD, CA**
- **South Bay Water Recycling
CA**



San Antonio's Story

- **Surging population & periodic droughts required a solution**
- **Started with Community Outreach Plan**
- **Used community fairs, materials, advertising & bill inserts**
- **Comprehensive school outreach program**

Conserve II, Orlando

- Faced with degradation of water quality & population increases
- Recycled water used for citrus crop production
- Required extensive studies to prove safety to farmers
- Largest reuse project in the world

South Bay Water Recycling

- **Faced with discharge issues and serious droughts**
- **Required construction of 100+ miles of pipelines through 3 cities**
- **Public outreach started concurrently with preliminary design**
- **Citizens Advisory Committee gave strong support to project**

Common Themes of Success

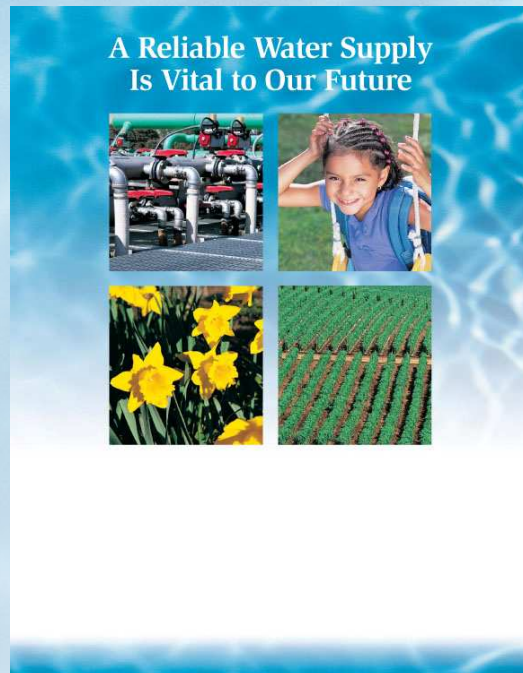
- **These projects articulated a clear need for more water**
- **Issues and concerns were addressed and resolved**
- **The public was informed from the beginning of the planning stage**
- **Outreach focused on the benefits to the community**
- **Agencies understand that open communication is essential**



How Outreach Built Support

- Reuse is viewed as a beneficial water supply
- Public understanding and acceptance is high
- People know what purple pipes are for
- Public can see the results with green playgrounds, golf courses, landscape and crops

How Did They Get There?



- Began with a comprehensive strategic plan
- Prepared realistic budgets
- Designed outreach tailored to their community
- Addressed fears and concerns
- Provided customers with good service

More Keys To Success

- **Build trust with candor, openness, responsiveness**
- **Reach the public using various means (newspapers, events, mailings)**
- **Encourage and cultivate leadership from local officials**
- **Keep the media fully briefed throughout the project**

How to Start a Public Outreach Program

- **“Marketing Nonpotable Recycled Water – A Guidebook for Successful Outreach & Customer Marketing”**
- **Purchase through the Watereuse Foundation**
- **Provides guidance, templates & tools**

More Successful Outreach Strategies

- **Train staff to provide superb service to customers**
- **Anticipate crises and have contingency plans in place**
- **Prepare for construction outreach**
- **Incorporate water reuse into school education outreach**

Other Ways to Learn about Water Recycling

- Visit Watereuse.org for resources
- Attend reuse conferences
- Tour other successful water reuse programs

*Communication is vital
to the success of reuse*



Questions and Comments?

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